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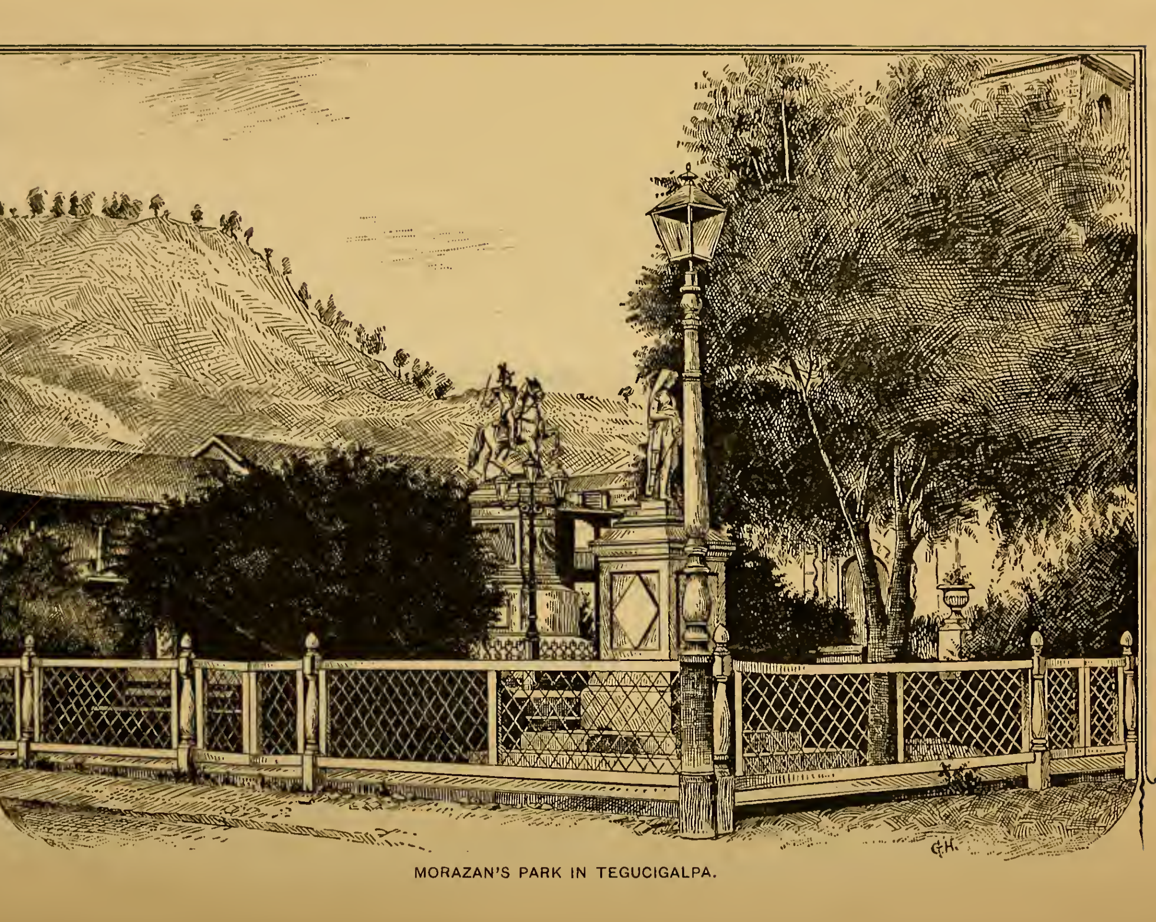
America

BY

E. C. FIALLOS

With respectful compliments of

E. C. Fiallos



MORAZAN'S PARK IN TEGUCIGALPA.

A SKETCH

OF

CENTRAL AMERICA.

READ BEFORE THE "UNITY CLUB,"

WASHINGTON, D. C.

BY

E. C. FIALLOS, C. E.

SEC'Y OF THE LEGATION OF HONDURAS.

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By invitation of the "Unity Club," the following paper was read at the "Norwood Institute" the evening of the 5th of February last. At the request of the same Club, and for the purpose of satisfying repeated inquiries about Central America, it was deemed convenient to give to it a wider publication:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure that I now have the honor of addressing such a distinguished audience upon a subject that I do not hesitate to call very interesting.

The words "Central America" are full of meaning. Not only are they connected in our minds with the exciting incidents of Columbus' arrival at our shores 400 years ago, but they speak to us of a still remoter period, in which, as Judge Hayden explained to us a few days ago in his paper on the Ruins of Central America, a civilization existed there that was already old when the discoverer first landed on the northern coast of Honduras. And to-day, those two words represent to us the middle portion of our continent, a narrow but important strip of land which, like a golden link, binds North and South America together. By reason of its geographical situation alone, the Central American Isthmus is destined to have a future of greatness and prosperity. Across it, the great problem of interoceanic communication has to be solved, and through the same, the traffic from North to South has to be established when the improved methods of terrestrial locomotion shall have caused the construction of an International American Railway extending from Canada to Patagonia. But aside from this, the five Central American States possess so many other desirable conditions; they have such a generally healthful climate, they are so picturesque, with their green mountains and blue lakes, their valleys, winding rivers, and imposing volcanoes; and above all, they are so rich in resources belonging to each of the three natural kingdoms; so well adapted to the development of agricultural and manufacturing industries, that on these grounds alone they can rival other countries, however gifted they may be.

The Republic of Salvador is as large as the State of Massachusetts, and has a population of 600.000 inhabitants, who are known to be exceedingly industrious. They quickly rebuild and improve their pretty cities whenever earthquakes destroy them. In the cultivation of the soil, they have actually made an agricultural garden nearly the size of their whole territory. For miles and miles you can travel along the lines of their well-kept coffee and sugar-cane plantations, or between fields where balsam, indigo, tobacco, corn, and fruits are cultivated, or artificial pasture-lands are carefully fenced. There are large sugar refineries, wool, silk, and tobacco factories, where excellent blankets, shawls, and cigars are made for home and outside consumption. Their commerce is increasing to such an extent, that the three ports they have on the Pacific coast are not sufficient for its demands, and they are about to establish a fourth. They have built a railroad from the port of Acajutla to Sonsonate and Santa Tecla, which will soon reach the capital and continue as far as the foot of the Santa Ana volcano, where lies the important city of that name, the chief agricultural centre of the nation.

The educational system of Salvador is indeed highly advanced, and equally extended to either sex. Only a short time ago a mathematically-inclined young lady, named Antonia Navarro, graduated with honors as a topographical engineer. The capital of Salvador was the first in Central America to establish throughout the city a system of public telephonic communication.

Costa Rica is another prosperous, peaceful, and attractive little Republic, where foreign visitors are agreeably surprised to find themselves surrounded by an energetic, european-like people, actively engaged in the pursuits of commerce and agriculture; and who enjoy all the comforts of civilized communities, without feeling, as yet, the pressure and hurry that usually accompany those comforts in other countries. The inhabitants are healthy looking and of a remarkably fair complexion. Education is widely distributed among all classes and sexes. Most of the principal families frequently travel abroad and thus become familiar with other languages, fashions, and social customs. Besides that, there are a good many foreigners established there who love the country as well as their own, especially when they become attached to it by matrimonial ties. The women of Costa Rica

are very lovable, and are noted for their domestic qualities and varied accomplishments.

San José, the capital, has a population of 25,000 souls. It has a fine system of water-supply and the streets are lighted by electricity. Together with the other main cities, Alajuela, Heredia and Cartago, it is situated on a large and fertile plain, 3,500 feet above the level of the sea, and surrounded by half a dozen volcanoes, one of which, at least, the costaricans like to see in constant operation acting as a safety-valve for the surrounding country. The railroad of Costa Rica unites the capital with all the principal cities and provinces. The interior of the country will soon have an easy access to the Atlantic port Limon, where the line starts. When that is accomplished, Costa Rica's great agricultural productions, of which her excellent coffee is the best known, will receive a renewed impulse. In the city of Heredia a silk factory has been established, the shawls of which successfully compete with similar imported articles.

Guatemala, the most northern of the five Republics, is, in area and population, as large as Salvador and Costa Rica together. Her million and a half inhabitants raise annually more than twice as much coffee as the two combined. They also manufacture and export sugar and fabrics of wool and cotton ; some of the latter have received premiums in expositions abroad. The capital of the republic is the handsomest city in Central America. It is situated on a wide plateau over 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. Sixty thousand healthy people live in a cool and delicious climate, in a clean city with abundant water supply, street-cars, and other comforts. The markets are abundantly supplied with fresh meats, fish, vegetables, and fruits of all kinds, all the year round. Nowhere have I seen so many and such exquisite flowers as in Guatemala city. In few other places can the diplomatic representatives of foreign countries be so well pleased with the climate and conditions of life as there. With magnificent stores selling articles from all nations, with a fine opera house, driving parks, horse races, and above all, amongst a cultured society of charming women and distinguished men, life is truly a constant recreation. The majestic volcanoes silently contemplate from the distance the rapid growth of a city whose inhabitants, free from old superstitions, build to-day schools, hospitals, and

railroad stations, instead of chinese walls, convents, and monasteries.

Within the last decade a railroad has been constructed from Guatemala city to the port of San José on the Pacific ocean, so that now one can ride in a Pullman car from the steamer to the capital taking four hours for a journey that formerly required as many days. The road is about to be extended to Puerto Barrios on the Atlantic coast.

Nicaragua has always been known to us as a progressive and liberal-minded commonwealth. Her people have been noted for their institutions of learning, their freedom of government and absolute liberty of the press. The population of Nicaragua is the same as that of Salvador, although her area is nearly six times as large. But three-quarters of her territory are uninhabited ; the people have settled on the low valleys, around the great lakes, which are situated in the southern portion of the country. The northern and eastern portions, which are mountainous or coast-lands covered with primeval forests, are practically unexplored. Looking at the five sister republics from a panoramic point of view, Nicaragua would undoubtedly be pronounced the most picturesque of the family. Pray conceive a water-color with the following combinations : The gray volcanic peaks projected on a tropical sky, the mountains at a distance with a greenish hue, lower down a portion of the sea, and then the lakes, the cities, and the rivers ; and the effect will be beautiful whether the sun or the moon be supposed to be above the horizon.

The climate of the low lands of Nicaragua is rather warm, but the energy of the people is not weakened by the effects of temperature. On the land and water constant work is carried on. They produce coffee, cocoa, and india rubber in great quantities ; their farms and cattle ranches are very extensive, and the export of fruits and hides is considerable. In the north there are excellent gold mines and placers, which have, as yet, been little worked. Public schools, as well as the higher branches of learning, have received constant attention. Foreign professors have repeatedly been engaged the more efficiently to reform their educational institutions.

The Government has built, with its own pecuniary resources, a national railroad, which extends across the country uniting

the principal cities with the port of Corinto on the Pacific coast. Lines of pretty steamboats ply on the Granada lake, merrily answering the whistles of the locomotives on the shore. But Nicaragua's great expectations are very justly founded on the construction of the "Interoceanic canal." And the enterprise is sure to be successful: It starts under the best auspices; the eminent engineer Menocal at its front; a healthy climate in its favor; plenty of cheap labor and food, and public faith in its support.

But lack of time on one hand, and fear of trespassing on your patience on the other, will not permit me to enter into further considerations regarding the whole of Central America, and I shall, therefore, content myself with describing to you, more in detail, only one of the five States or Republics into which our ideal "*Central American Nation*" is, up to the present time, unfortunately divided. I shall speak to you of Honduras, the section where I have lived and worked, and which is, in consequence, the best known to me.

Honduras is, I assure you, a promising little country which well deserves the attention that the people of the United States are now beginning to give to it. Geographically considered, it is most favorably situated in the very heart of our great continent, the true centre having been calculated near Comayagua. There is hardly another country on our planet which can compete with it in respect to situation and natural advantages for establishing commercial relations with the other nations of the world. Situated between the 13th and 16th parallels of north latitude, it approaches more than Panama, Costa Rica, or Nicaragua to the world's zone of maximum civilization and industry, which lies in the higher northern latitudes. Early in the 16th century it was found that the Gulf of Honduras on the Atlantic ocean and the Bay of Fonseca on the Pacific, offered the best ports on either coast. Hernan Cortés founded Port Caballos in the year 1525, and wrote to the King these words: "It is the best harbor hitherto discovered on all the coast of the mainland, from Las Perlas to Florida." As to the Bay of Fonseca, high authorities have stated that "It has no rival on the entire Pacific coast as regards extent, security, beauty, healthfulness, and commercial position." So that Honduras, unlike Peru and Bolivia, that might give a Potosi for a port situated in a congenial neighborhood; unlike

proud Chili, pressed between the waves and the Andes; unlike Paraguay, situated a thousand miles inland the river Plata, and unlike most other countries, either in Europe or America, she commands the free use of those two vast highways which have been of such incalculable benefit to mankind and simply takes her choice from the excellent harbors she possesses. When a person living in the interior of the country announces his intention of visiting New York or the Paris Exposition, his friends generally ask of him which route he intends to take, and he usually replies that, for the sake of variety, he will leave by Amapala and return by Puerto Cortés.

You may conceive Honduras as an oval-shaped country extending 200 miles from north to south, between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, and 400 from east to west, between her sister Central American Republics. Its size is like that of one of your average States, almost precisely the same as that of New York. The total area is divided into thirteen sections or "departments," eleven of which are situated on the borders of the country, and two lie in the middle, contending with each other for the privilege of having the seat of government.

The topography of Honduras is very irregular. Mountains appear to be arranged in disconnected groups; the rivers that drain them are tortuous, and one of them describes a long, horseshoe curve. There are extensive plains near the coasts, numerous valleys among the mountains, and high, level plateaus, lakes and peaks distributed all over the country. There are in this connection two very important features to which I wish to call your attention. Honduras is the only one of the Central American States that has no volcanoes and has never suffered from their effects. So unused have our people been to the volcanic phenomena that in 1835, when the Cosegüina of Nicaragua made its great eruption and the scattered ashes, reaching as far as Honduras, obscured the sun, they thought the Day of Judgment had arrived and acted accordingly. There were but two men who could see through the darkness at that time: one was a priest, who attributed the fine dust to a volcano; the other was an honest miner, who, amid the general consternation, coolly gathered handfuls of the gray ashes to test them in his horn spoon. The other special feature of Honduras is, that the great Cordillera

or "backbone" of the continent, being interrupted there, offers a singular facility for building, in a straight line and at a level grade, an interoceanic railway, which will not only aid the general development of the country, but will powerfully compete as a transisthmian route with the railroad of Panamá or with any other that may be established.

Let me now direct your attention to the natural resources of Honduras. Geographies simply tell you that the country produces mahogany, hides, silver and gold, in which words the three natural kingdoms are represented. History informs you that "Tegucigalpa," the aboriginal name of the capital, means "silver hills;" that silver and gold were plentiful when the Spaniards arrived, and that during the colonial period, when there were no roads, and the Indians were compelled to work the mines by means of fire and water, over $3,000,000 were annually exported to Spain. The official records in the archives at Tegucigalpa conclusively prove the great number of veins that were registered and the enormous output of the mines worked before the Independence in 1821. The King's tribute was only one-fifth, and it went far to support his luxury.

During half a century little mining has been done. But to-day contemporaneous records read differently. There are now thirty-one strong mining companies established in the country, one of which alone exported to New York last year 37½ tons of bullion. This company has been producing $130,000 a month, and is worth millions of dollars to-day. The mine is situated in the middle of the country, 21 miles to the northeast of the capital, and is worked by the most approved modern methods. It has a mill with 45 stamps, a suspended cable-tramway nearly three miles long, and a powerful compressed-air plant for drilling the rock and tunneling the mountain at the rate of 600 feet per month.

I said before that Honduras is divided into thirteen departments, and there are only two or three of them that are not rich in precious metals. North and south, east and west are the mines and placers alike distributed. And nowhere are so many facilities offered to honest mining enterprises as in Honduras. Our mining laws are very liberal, but the Government, in its desire to further induce investment of foreign capital, has granted

the miners concessions of all kinds. It has built wagon-roads from the coast to the principal mining districts in order to facilitate the transportation of machinery and implements. Most of the mining companies are, I am glad to say, North American, so that English is spoken more than any other foreign language, and is preferably taught in the schools. You may be pleased to learn that a weekly journal is regularly published in English in the capital, some of the late numbers of which you may see here to-night.

Besides silver and gold, Honduras has many useful metals and important mineral deposits. Native copper, lead, and excellent magnetic iron ore, I know to be exceedingly abundant. Seams of bituminous coal have been discovered in various localities, and the geological inspections hitherto made are very promising in this respect. The opal mines of Gracias have been successfully worked for many years. Veins of beautiful marble and colored sand-stones, slates, and kaolin are found in several places; also thermal springs and fountains of mineral waters.

As regards the vegetable kingdom, Honduras ranks equally well. Last year we exported from the north coast $1,221,000 in fruits, woods, and india-rubber. We sent to the United States over 60,000,000 bananas, one for each inhabitant. In many of the cities I have recently visited in this country, I have been shown the fine mahogany and rose-wood of Honduras occupying places of honor.

Although the principal wealth of Honduras lies underground, and mining is the chief industry of the country, we have excellent soil, from which, with the least effort, we produce in large quantities, corn, wheat, rice, sugar-cane, coffee, tobacco, etc. At the New Orleans Exposition our sugar-cane, sarsaparilla, and tobacco obtained the first prize, and we made there the best exhibit of fibre plants and precious woods. At the Exposition of Barcelona we obtained a premium for coffee and sarsaparilla. Fruits of all climates are produced there—from oranges, pine-apples, and cocoanuts, to peaches, apples, grapes, and strawberries.

The cattle industry is of considerable importance to Honduras. We export 20,000 head of cattle to Guatemala and Cuba every year. But agriculture, in all its branches, is still carried on in the most primitive style. Why should the natives cultivate the soil with American ploughs and fertilize it with guano from Chili,

it the crops are just as good without them? Why have artificial pastures if on the natural ones of the open fields, cattle and horses thrive so well that anybody can buy a good horse for twenty dollars, and a cow for half that amount?

The climate of Honduras is in general very pleasant and healthful, and so varied as to suit all tastes. The mercury ranges from 50 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the height above the level of the sea. Throughout the year, the air is constantly refreshed and purified by the breezes from both oceans sweeping over the green mountains and through the forests of pine trees. It is far more pleasant and healthy in the interior of Honduras, during the summer months, than in the cities of New York and Washington. The late newspapers I have received from home do not mention anything about "influenza," or about any other epidemic disease. Cases of longevity are by no means uncommon; my own grandparents lived up to the age of ninety, having contributed fourteen children to the needed increase of population. The rains are very regular and abundant, sufficient only to wet the fertile soil, but never so excessive as to cause disastrous floods. As it never snows or freezes, crops can be produced by irrigation all the year round, and the streams steadily utilized for motive power.

While the population of Salvador is 84 inhabitants per square mile, that of Honduras is only 7. We have 350,000 people in all. They are mostly mixed of the whites and Indians; but Indians endowed with many good qualities. They are healthy, strong, and remarkably intelligent; they make excellent soldiers or miners, and are honest, law-abiding, and hospitable. So that we are fortunately in the best condition to welcome desirable immigration only, and avoid the necessity of having to face those embarrassing social questions called "The Negro" and "The Chinese Problems."

The general state of civilization of Honduras is not, as commonly supposed, half a century behind the times. When you recollect that it was only 69 years ago that we achieved our independence, and that up to the year 1821, learning to read and write was the privilege of a few, and superstition and blind obedience the basis of education of the masses, you will acknowledge that a great deal has been accomplished since. Fanaticism

has been eradicated from the public mind, and to-day, the Church and State being separated, religious beliefs are entirely free. The proportion of those who know how to read and write is larger than that of many older countries that have enjoyed better advantages. Our system of public schools is uniformly extended to the smallest settlements. Primary instruction is obligatory, and last year 74,000 children attended school. At the New Orleans Exposition, first prizes were awarded to Honduras for school exhibit, ladies' needle-work and crayon pictures. The higher and professional instruction includes all that is taught in modern institutions elsewhere.

No one, whether native or foreigner, is permitted to practice any profession unless he submits to an examination by the respective faculty and obtains a diploma therefor. No quack doctors allowed!

Our constitution and form of government are exactly the same as those of the United States. The legislation of the country, reformed ten years ago, is similar to that of Chili, and includes many of the most advanced principles of the present times; civil marriage, unrestricted right of willing, validity of contracts, without *restitution in integrum*, etc.

The standard of morality has been raised, as proved by criminal statistics and by the registers showing a marked decrease of illegitimate children. Our police force is as much like yours as it can be, considering that it was organized, and is still commanded, by a competent North American chief. The habits of work and industry are becoming firmly established, and a desire to advance and to improve the former conditions of life are everywhere apparent. The value of time is better appreciated; the frequent feast-days of the past have gone, and now only the 15th of September, which is equivalent to your 4th of July, is a legal holiday. During the whole year all public offices and courts are open, even on Good Fridays. On the very spot where 15 years ago we used to see the bull-fights and the killing of men and horses, the people gather to-day around bronze and marble monuments, amidst the perfume of flowers, to listen to the strains of Wagner and Beethoven rendered by a band of forty native musicians.

We have a good mint and hospital; also printing-offices, from

which periodicals and books are constantly issued. In a country where thirteen years ago Morse's invention was almost unknown, a network of wires is extended over its entire surface, and connected by the submarine cable with the whole world. 20,000 messages are transmitted every month. Our postal system keeps pace with modern wants, and although some writers on Central America have unwittingly stated that it takes fifteen days to go from the ports of Honduras to the capital, I may more truthfully say that I have received in this city letters from home which required less than a fortnight for transmission.

The maritime or foreign commerce of Honduras is regularly carried on by 11 steamers and 12 sailing-vessels on the Pacific coast, and by 34 steamers and 44 sailing-vessels on that of the Atlantic.

I shall now say a few words regarding the interoceanic railroad and our national debt, which have been so much commented upon. Our long-desired railway across the country can be compared, in length and facility of construction, to that existing between Washington and New York. Our Government attempted to build it thirty years ago. Not having succeeded in organizing a company in the United States, it borrowed from English capitalists five millions of dollars for the construction of one-third of the line, giving in bond the road itself and some national lands. The work was begun at Puerto Cortés in October, 1868. But scarcely 50 miles had been built, when Honduras found herself defrauded of the entire loan and unable to pay it or to prosecute the work. From time to time our Government has endeavored to enter into an agreement with the English bondholders, so as to be able to continue the construction of the road; but having always failed in its efforts, the country has at the present time only 38 miles of road in actual operation, which are chiefly sustained by the wood and fruit industries. The rails of the other twelve miles are covered with weeds.

The time is, however, near at hand when that condition of affairs will change. Several years of peace have permitted the complete reorganization of the country. While during the first 55 years of independent life, Honduras was harassed and impoverished by constant revolutions, and the only ambition of most of its public men was to become absolute rulers, as is shown by

the fact that we actually had 29 Presidents in those 55 years, or one for each period of less than 1 year and 11 months, to-day the prevailing tendency is quite different—the government, the statesmen, and the people are equally interested in matters looking to the general welfare of the country. Of these, the most important are: A reasonable and final settlement of our English debt, so as to immediately begin the construction of the interoceanic railway. The other is the realization of a union of the five Central American Republics into one homogeneous and strong political Nation. Once that union accomplished, and the Nicaragua canal constructed, Central America will assuredly attract the eyes of the whole world, as a rich, healthy, peaceful, and in every way inviting country, which can comfortably support 25 millions of people.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *February* 22, 1890.

DR. GEORGE BEN JOHNSTON,
Richmond, Va.

DEAR DOCTOR: Enclosed please find the manuscript of a "Sketch of Central America," which I recently read before the "Unity Club" of this city. I forward it to you with the request that you may give me your impartial opinion about it. You have visited my country with a true spirit of observing its resources and advantages. Your varied instruction and good judgment render your authority invaluable to me and of great weight to your countrymen.

I have been asked to have said paper published, but before doing so, I should like you to please give to it the benefit of a few remarks.

Believe me, very respectfully, your friend,

E. C. FIALLOS.

RICHMOND, VA., *March* 1, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIALLOS: I have read with great pleasure and profit your paper on Central America. Particularly interesting to me is that portion of it relating to Honduras, where I have spent much time investigating her wonderful resources. This production, coming as it does from one whose position and knowledge entitle him to speak authoritatively on all matters pertaining to his country, should be widely disseminated. The information it contains cannot fail to interest thoughtful people, and to direct attention to that favored spot; I therefore request you to have published your article that this end may be met. In making this request, which is prompted by a sincere admiration for the re-

sources of Honduras, will you not allow me to call your attention to some points in the paper which, on account of their importance, I fear you have not sufficiently emphasized.

The past proves by records the richness of the mines (gold and silver). The eagerness with which mining claims are sought and developed by sagacious and experienced North American miners and the results they have obtained by advanced methods, substantiates your statement "that the principal wealth of Honduras lies under the ground." The number of argentiferous and auriferous deposits and their richness, coupled with the liberality of your mining laws, offer to the prospector all that he could wish.

Your forests are a source of even as great wealth as your mines and more available, requiring less skill and capital to make them yield a profit. The cabinet woods abound, and are of a quality not to be surpassed by any. Notably among these are the rosewood, mahogany, ebony, and ronron. The accessibility of these trees to navigable waters, their gigantic size and uncommon fineness of texture, render them peculiarly valuable.

Nowhere have I seen such a variety of medicinal herbs; growing unplucked are many which command high prices and ready sale in our markets and those of Europe. With little training the inhabitants could gather and prepare thousands of dollars' worth of roots and leaves, from the sale of which handsome sums could be realized. That singular and interesting orchid, the vanilla bean, is almost everywhere to be found, and with care in its cultivation and preparation, could be made to rival its Mexican neighbor. Allspice grows profusely in Olancho, and is not utilized. The yuca, from which an excellent starch can be extracted by simple and inexpensive processes, flourishes on every hillside.

Journeying through Honduras one is never out of sight of a fibre plant. Perhaps the most important are the mescal and pita. A very superior quality of cordage, bagging, and coarser fabrics can be made from them by very simple methods. The fineness, strength, and gloss of the pita fibre renders it capable of higher development. From it, a fabric, as strong as linen and as soft and brilliant as silk, could be woven. It would also furnish a stock that would make a paper equal in toughness and durability to parchment.

Peanuts could be cultivated very advantageously, and would yield, as they have done with us in Virginia, handsome returns. The tobacco of Honduras is already well known in the States and abroad. The output, however, is so insignificant as compared with what it should be that it has not attracted the attention it deserves. It has soil and climate that will produce all grades of tobacco from our heavy Western to the delicate and fragrant leaf of Cuba. I have seen in the villages of Honduras cigars made from native tobacco and sold at two cents apiece

that would rival the best cigars exhibited for sale in our shops. Tobacco should be one of your most important products. for your soil produces it with scarcely no work, and your climate facilitates curing it.

Sugar-cane and cotton are perennial, and with trifling labor could be made most important crops. The large size and succulence of the cane stalk are very striking. The fineness of the cotton fibre is equally so. These crops could be cultivated and reduced to a marketable shape in Honduras at a far less cost than in Louisiana or Texas, where they are a source of great revenue.

The character of the climate practically does away with "seasons" in the cultivation of the soil when irrigation is brought to assist. Hence the raising of fruits and vegetables for canning and preserving could be reduced to a degree of certainty with a minimum expenditure of labor. Neither France nor California will produce finer grapes. Peaches, figs, dates, and olives can be cultivated everywhere, and would thrive as the wild "Guayaba," from which such a delicious jelly is made.

Your horses and mules are somewhat under size. This defect comes from breeding "in and in." The introduction of some new blood would remedy this and bring up the standard to quite a degree of perfection; for notwithstanding the smallness of the horse he is very strong and spirited and capable of great feats of endurance, thus exhibiting qualities admirable to build on. Your cattle, too, suffer from the same cause. These, however, are of better grade than the average Western cattle, and far more beautiful in form. The vast expanse of splendid grass-lands over which I traveled and upon which I saw no herds, depressed me. The valleys, with their perpetual verdure, wide-spreading trees, and crystal streams should have been studded with herds of fat cattle, and the hillsides with flocks of sheep and long-haired goats. The abundance and fine quality of native grasses and the number and ample size of the streams of sweet, pure water render the country remarkably well suited to grazing purposes.

A mistaken idea concerning the healthfulness of all of the Central American countries exists among a large class of my countrymen. Where the climate is so uniform (never excessively hot), where drainage is so perfect, and where pure water so abundant, disease cannot prevail. Nowhere have I seen healthier people.

Your government is now so stable, so free from internal strifes that formerly harassed it, that life and property find such protection as our own affords, and this adds to the inducements the natural resources of the country offer.

Your very sincere friend,

GEORGE BEN JOHNSTON, M. D.

